

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. 119-2004



To: Mayor David Dermer and
Members of the City Commission

Date: May 18, 2004

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager 

Subject: **CURRENT STRATEGIES IN POLICING**

This Letter to the Commission is to provide an update on policing strategies being used to deal with the tremendous growth in popularity of Miami Beach.

Ensuring the public safety during these changing times has mandated a new approach to fighting crime with limited resources. To make the best possible use of patrol personnel, a Shift Overlap Initiative was launched in January 2004. This proactive policing strategy utilizes the first hour of the officer's shift, which overlaps with the previous shift to target problematic areas and focus on quality of life type crimes such as drinking in public and aggressive driving. The overlap period occurs three times each day and provides the Police Department with the manpower needed to set the tone for the rest of the shift. With the effort being made during this overlap period, crime is down 1.7 percent and arrests are up 34.4% as compared to the first four months of 2003.

Combating prostitution has also been a major focus. On March 27, April 17, and May 8th prostitution details were conducted resulting in the arrest of 72 prostitutes. With the renewed support of the judicial system and State Attorney's Office, enrollment in the Mapping Program has increased and higher bond amounts are being utilized. Community policing tax resources have also been used to add officers to the South Pointe and City Center redevelopment areas. This has added an enhanced patrol presence for the problematic nightclubs south of 5th street and in the parks in the South Pointe and City Center areas. This RDA funding is also providing for further missions by the Homeless Outreach Team.

To further maximize police coverage during peak periods, the work schedules in the Patrol Division were also modified to increase the amount of officers working on the weekends. A Crime Suppression Team was also added to the midnight shift as well as additional beach coverage on the afternoon shift. There is also a Command Staff member working each weekend as the Staff Duty Officer. In recognition of the greatly increased demands for service, the Police Department is also in the process of hiring an additional fifteen officers which will bring the Police Department up to the authorized staffing level of 381 by June 2004. These changes in manpower allocation are designed to enable the Police Department to achieve its number one goal of creating the safest community of its kind by being crime fighting professionals and delivering personalized service to everyone 24/7.

I have asked my assistant to schedule a briefing with you, the Police Chief and myself to further discuss our policing efforts.

JMG\DWD\tr

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